

Open Book Makes Open Mind Discussion Groups Maintain

Study Clubs Stimulate an Intellectual Curiosity Here

(Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a series of articles on what Torrance has to offer culturally).
(Next Week: Cultural Contributions of Junior Colleges)

By Durfee Parkins

"It is time we had uncommon schools, that we did not leave off our education when we begin to be men and women. It is time that villages were universities, and their elder inhabitants the fellows of universities..." wrote Henry David Thoreau.

In other words, life is not complete if individuals fail to become all that they are capable of being.

For these reasons and many more, art, music, theatre and intellectual discussion groups have been established all over the world and in Torrance as well. The activities have been guided by a number of serious minded citizens who not only enjoy their work for what they can get out of it, but for what they can lend to the cultural growth of a community such as ours.

Through culture we can become acquainted with the best that has been known and said in the world and particularly is this true with the intellectual discussion groups.

Intellectual Groups

So important was culture to Swinburne, that he wrote in his Essays and Studies, "To have read the greatest works of any great poet, to have beheld or heard the greatest works of any great painter or musician is a possession added to the best things of life." The average person can't afford to stand still. And the average person, not necessarily the intellectual high brow, or college graduate is the person you will find in a Great Books club or the Delphian Society, local intellectual discussion groups.

The Great Books program, community sponsored in cooperation with the Great Books Foundation in Chicago, has over 1500 groups throughout the United States. These groups have local headquarters in Torrance and in Manhattan Beach.

They were established to "keep alive the common heritage of thought, sensibility and faith which finds expression in the great books of our tradition; to give



LEADERS MEET

Gathered at the home of Don S. Smith, 22804 Anza ave. are leaders and presidents of three intellectual discussion groups in the area. Smith, (left) leader of the Great Books group in Torrance; Mrs. D. J. Quinlivan, president of the Delphian Society, Kappa chapter; and Robert Thompson, (right) leader of the Manhattan Beach Great Book club discuss the nature and scope of their respective organizations.

men, through reading and discussing the great books, a richer comprehension of what a good life can be, and to help them help themselves, their community and their nation." Anyone may belong to the groups—the only prerequisites being a willingness to read, a fundamental interest in past and present issues and a desire to discuss these issues.

Delphians Active

A similar group in Torrance is the Delphian society. Its aim is self improvement in order to attain better thinking, better expression and a better understanding of other peoples.

These aims are carried out by a program of study and discussion of great literary efforts that embrace the psychological, political and cultural patterns of the world. The society, comprised entirely of women, is a non-political and non-sectarian organization established nationally in 1910.

By studying groups of people, their culture and government, the Delphians, with local chapters in Manhattan Beach, Hollywood Riviera, Portuguese Bend and Torrance, believe they can better understand themselves. This is their major concern.

"Culture is Reading," according to Matthew Arnold. But it is much more. It is an understanding and evaluation of life which can be obtained for the most part through an open mind and an open book.

Knights Of Columbus Schedule Annual New Year's Eve Celebration

The annual Knights of Columbus New Year's Eve ball will be held in the Los Crusados Council hall. Dance music will be provided from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. by Keith Williams and his orchestra. Afterwards breakfast will be served.

Tickets for the event may be obtained from any of the following council members: F. A. Leone, Dave Sheppard, Fred Lippert Sr., James O'Toole, Leroy Armstrong, Jim Crawford, Jim McDonald, or Martin O'Malley.

Since attendance will be limited this year, council members are urged to secure their tickets before December 10. Tickets unsold after this date will be made available to friends of members.

A meeting was held at the home of Martin O'Malley to appoint the following committee chairmen for the event: Lyle O'Hora and Larry Sargent, general co-chairmen; James O'Toole, ticket chairman; Jack Steinberg, decorations; Jim McDonald, food committee; Jim Crawford, clean up; F. A. Leone, door committee; and Dave Sheppard, publicity.

R. B. Harbor Named For Congressman

Redondo Beach's multi-million dollar harbor has been officially designated as King Harbor by action of the City Council in honor of veteran Congressman Cecil R. King.

The event marked the first time in history that a major harbor in the United States has been named for a living member of Congress.

King is credited with authoring and carrying through Congress the legislation which secured federal funds for the \$10,000,000 harbor, scheduled for completion in August, 1958.

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Local Great Books Clubs Stimulate Discussion And Study Of Literary Classics

The greatest books of our civilization—the "Bible," Homer's "Iliad," Nietzsche's "Beyond Good and Evil," Shakespeare's "Macbeth," are only a few of the many classics read by the members of the Great Books club. The six year course of study embraces philosophy, religion, government, mathematics, drama, science, humor, logic, psychology, history, novels and poetry.

Self-Education

Founded in 1947 to foster self-education through group discussion, the club is America's largest program in adult liberal education. All books are furnished by the Great Books Foundation in Chicago.

Twice a month Torrance and Manhattan Beach clubs meet to discuss the book that has been read by each member in the interim. The technique used in discussion is Socratic—a logical method of questioning and answering. The leaders, volunteer laymen, are thereby able to stimulate discussion and keep the conversation orderly and relevant.

According to Robert Thompson, leader of the Manhattan group, this "not only develops the critical faculty of the individual but, through active participation, makes it communicable. The Great Books movement has served an important purpose in re-establishing that concept which describes enlightened citizenship as the cornerstone of democracy."

Although discussions are moderated by a "leader" the group has no formal organization. There are no dues, tuition or other charges, no credits given or certificates conferred. Don S. Smith, moderator of the Torrance club, explains that "the binding force of the group is

the ideas of the Great Books themselves."

Exchange Ideas

The experience of belonging to such a group is a challenging one, intellectually stimulating with a great amount of pleasure derived as members exchange insights, beliefs and doubts.

One of the basic ideas is that by studying old beliefs the individual helps himself—dispel fear, clear up misunderstanding, and plan an intelligent course of action for the future.

Both groups are in their fourth year of study. They have already completed such works as Smith's "Wealth of Nations," Aristotle's "Communist Manifesto," Marx's "Ethics," Shakespeare's "King Lear," and Dostoyevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov," to mention only a few.

The six year reading list also includes works from such well known literary and intellectual figures as Plato, Machiavelli, Thoreau, Homer, Rousseau, Voltaire, Freud, Locke, Kant, Tolstoy and many others.

In Torrance, the Great Books club meets the first and third Sundays of each month at the El Retiro Park Community hall from 8:15-10:15 p.m. Interested persons are always welcome to visit and membership is open to all.

STILL NEED IDEAS on what to give? . . . Smart suggestions aplenty are yours in The Gift Spotter in Torrance Press Classified Page 51.

Rome Cable Employs OK Union

Rome Cable co. employees elected by a large majority to become affiliated with the Central Steel Workers of America at an election conducted by the National Labor Board, No. 8.

Nomination of officers for their local union will be held December 8 at 10 a.m. at the Border Ave. Labor temple. Election of officers will be held at the same place December 15, 10 a.m.

Post Office Services Told

Public window service for purchase of money orders, stamps and mailings of parcel post will be available during the Christmas season at:

Main postoffice, 1433 Marcelina ave., North Torrance Station, 17415 S. Crenshaw blvd., WALTERIA Station, 4110 Pacific Coast Highway; Ruth's Variety Store, 23433 S. Western ave.

Public window service for purchases of stamps and mailings of parcel post only will be available at the Postal Annex, 3611 Torrance blvd., effective Friday, December 7, and the National Guard Armory, 2505 Cabrillo ave., effective Monday, December 10.

Tentative hours of service for the above units, except Ruth's Variety store, will be:

Through Friday, December 14: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, December 15: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, December 16, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.; December 17 through December 22: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Hours of service at Ruth's Variety store will be 9:15 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Psychological, Political And Cultural Patterns Studied By Delphian Society Here

The Delphians, an ambitious group of local women, meet twice a month at the Torrance library to discuss material which they have read furnished by the National Society. The name "Delphian" stems from the Oracle of Delphi, which was an ancient shrine that attracted pilgrims from all over the known world seeking Truth and Wisdom.

One of the interesting features of the organization is that members are chosen with many different educational, cultural and social backgrounds. Approximately 65% of the national membership has a college education.

According to Mrs. D. J. Quinlivan, president of the local chapter, Delphians feel that in order to more fully understand themselves they must be exposed to as many different cultures as possible. The basic concept of the three year program follows the same vein. All material is concerned with the psychological, political and cultural patterns throughout the world.

Political Patterns

During the year, which runs from September to June, members read a minimum of three books determined by the national headquarters in Chicago. So that everyone in the group may have a chance to conduct one of the seminar meetings, a different chairman is appointed each meeting. This year, the chapter is discussing political patterns. This includes representative governments of Great Britain, Latin American and Russia, and a special topic on "World Organization as a Road to Peace."

Psychological patterns, ranging from the American family, past and present, to the mental hygiene movement to the total personality, were discussed last year. The final phase of the program next year will embrace the cultures of different societies from the primitive tribes to the more complex civilizations. Special emphasis will be placed on living and educational standards in the United States.

Family Benefits

Although the organization is exclusively for women, the en-

Boosters Will Meet Monday

The Torrance Booster's club will meet December 10, 8 p.m. at the YMCA. The non-profit organization supports student activities, and encourages parent participation in the Torrance Unified School district. A membership drive is now underway and anyone in the North, South or Central Torrance area is welcome to come to the December meeting.

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